



Georgia Emergency Operations Plan

Emergency Support Function # 9 Annex **Search, Rescue & Recovery**



2015

ESF Coordinator and Support Agencies

ESF Coordinator

*Georgia Emergency Management Agency/
Homeland Security*

Primary Agency

*Georgia Emergency Management Agency/
Homeland Security*

Support Agencies

*Georgia Air Operations Branch
Georgia Bureau of Investigation
Georgia Department of Defense
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Georgia Department of Public Safety*

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

Emergency Support Function (ESF) #9 – Search, Rescue & Recovery is responsible for providing coordination of State resources for search, research, and recovery; and operations during an emergency or disaster that is beyond the capabilities of local governments within impacted areas. Operations for ESF#9 include five principle SAR functions: USAR, Water SAR, Wilderness SAR, Aviation SAR, and Recovery. GEMA/HS acts as the primary coordinating agency for all five SAR operational areas.

1.2 Scope

ESF #9 outlines Georgia's Search, Rescue, and Recovery (SRR) response framework. ESF#9 provides the Georgia Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security (GEMA/HS) with the capability to coordinate SRR operations during an emergency or disaster that is beyond the capabilities of local governments. ESF#9 is comprised of primary and support State agencies that each have unique SRR capabilities.

SRR operations will be conducted for lost, missing, endangered, sick, injured, or deceased persons; and displaced or abandoned animals. SRR operations within Georgia are categorized into five principle types:

- Structural Collapse or Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)
- Waterborne Search and Rescue (Waterborne SAR)
- Inland or Wilderness Search and Rescue (Wilderness SAR)
- Aeronautical Search and Rescue (Aviation SAR)
- Animal and Human Remains Recovery (Recovery)

USAR operations primarily focus on the location, rescue, and initial stabilization of persons confined within collapsed structures in urban settings. USAR task forces also respond to persons trapped in vehicles, mines, collapsed trenches, or similar events.

Waterborne SAR operations focus on the location, rescue, and initial stabilization of persons along coastal areas, in creeks or rivers, and in lakes or reservoirs. Waterborne SAR operations may include an airborne response primarily utilizing helicopters or a maritime response utilizing boats / ships. Waterborne SAR operations are conducted in accordance with the National Search and Rescue Plan.

Inland or wilderness SAR operations focus on the location, rescue, and initial stabilization of persons in rural, remote, backcountry, thickly wooded, highly variable topography, and otherwise difficult to access areas. SAR operations in these areas may require specialized equipment and potentially airborne operations.

Aeronautical SAR operations are an integral component of the three aforementioned response areas. Aeronautical SAR operations also include response operations for an aviation-related incident.

Animal and Human Remains Recovery operations will be an integral component in SAR / Search, Rescue, and Recovery (SRR) operations. The “no one left behind” philosophy is integrated into the scope of operations. Animal rescue operations are in support of ESF#11 – Agricultural and Natural Resources and human remains recovery operations support ESF#8 – Public Health and Medical Services.

2.0 Concept of Operations

GEMA/HS is the sole coordinating agency for emergency or disaster operations pertaining to Search and Rescue within Georgia. Within the State Operations Center (SOC), the ESF Coordinator (GEMA/HS) will serve as the principle point of contact for operations associated with ESF#9. The scope, scale, and magnitude of the threat / incident will dictate which support agencies will be requested to assign personnel to the SOC.

All SRR operations within Georgia utilize the National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS). Georgia Search and Rescue (GSAR) task forces serve as the primary response entity for USAR operations in Georgia and have been developed and organized into NIMS Type I, Type II, Type III, or Type IV task forces. All GSAR resources are in compliance with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1006 (individual) standard and the NFPA 1670 (team) standard.

The Georgia SRR response framework utilizes five NIMS incident types that range from single jurisdictional (Type V or Type IV) through catastrophic (Type I). All SAR NIMS incident types are designed to support the local jurisdictional needs for a SRR response.

SRR operations within Georgia will generally fall into two incident scenarios: events with notice and no-notice events. When the occurrence of an event includes ample notice (a hurricane for example), SRR resources will be notified, prepared, and possibly pre-staged to enact the most expeditious response possible. No-notice events will rally and deploy SRR resources where needed with mission prioritization employed when necessary. GSAR task forces have been developed and are active in strategic locations throughout Georgia to ensure a timely response – typically within two hours.

For large scale incidents, SRR operations will be comprised of three components: SRR taskforces (Type IV through Type I or a combination of all types depending on the scope and requirements of the response), Incident Management Team(s) (IMT), and technical specialists.

State-level SRR resources will be sourced from multiple agencies / organizations including GSAR task forces. USAR task forces may be sourced from other states through the use of the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). Within the U.S., 42 states have similarly trained USAR task forces and each is a member of the Alliance of State Search and Rescue Teams (SUSAR). Federal-level DHS/FEMA USAR task forces may be integrated into the disaster response. Both state- and federal-level resources procured by EMAC or by Requests for Assistance (RFA) to FEMA are coordinated by ESF#5 – Emergency Management.

When there is an emergency or disaster, local governments are responsible for the activation of plans and appropriate use of personnel and equipment for SRR before requesting state assistance. SRR operations that exceed local capabilities will be augmented by state or federal SRR task forces.

In general support of emergency or disaster operations pertaining to SAR, ESF#9:

- Develops and maintains Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) / Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) for SRR operations and for personnel and canine teams who may participate in SRR efforts.
- Coordinates state SRR activities. GEMA/HS will integrate personnel and resources available from other state agencies into a disaster response in conjunction with ESF#5 – Emergency Management
- Utilizes the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), when needed.
- Assists local governments and state agencies in training and certifying personnel; and licensing rescue organizations.
- Ensures adequate levels of training for staff that support ESF#9 and conducts training sessions, workshops, and exercises to assist local communities and support agencies and organizations.
- Participates in regular planning meetings, with primary and support agencies.
- Recruit, train, certify, and license SRR personnel and canine teams, in compliance with standards set forth by the National Integration Center (NIC).
- Supports animal rescue missions in conjunction with ESF#11 – Agricultural and Natural Resources and human remains recovery missions in conjunction with ESF#8 – Public Health and Medical Services.
- Supports SRR requests from local agencies and EMAC requests from other states.
- Develops record reporting procedures to reflect local and state assistance and SRR support.
- Maintains financial records on personnel, supplies, and other resources utilized and report expenditures as requested.
- Develops awareness information about SRR protocols and operations and promote them to state and local organizations.
- Promotes a survival education program for the public.

- Coordinates with ESF#15 – External Affairs on the establishment of a Joint Information Center (JIC) and promotes the production and dissemination of public awareness statements.
- Maintains situational awareness and provides ESF#5 – Emergency Management, ESF#15 – External Affairs, and the Planning Section with regular updates and information to support briefings, situation reports, and incident action plans.

2.1 Activation – ESF#9

SRR resource integration into the local incident response occurs by submission of a request for assistance to the State Operations Center / GEMA/HS Communications Center by local Emergency Operations Centers (EOC). These requests are made when local resources are exhausted or insufficient to meet operational needs.

ESF#9 activates when the GEMA/HS Communications Center, upon guidance from the GEMA/HS Operations Division, issues operational orders to the ESF# 9 Coordinator / Primary Agency, which is the GEMA/HS SAR.

The GEMA/HS SAR Coordinator / ESF#9 Primary Emergency Coordinator will determine operational support requirements in the assemblage of an interagency coordination group.

2.2 Georgia ESF#9 Support

USAR:

USAR operations are primarily conducted by GSAR task forces. There are eight GSAR task forces – three Type II task forces and five Type III task forces – and each are comprised of local response entities. Because the task forces are comprised of local resources, impacts to their local areas may preclude their ability to respond to incidents elsewhere in Georgia or abroad.

State-level USAR support may include the integration of Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resources Division (DNR-WRD) Critical Action Teams (CAT) or Department of Public Safety (DPS) Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams. Additional non-governmental support for canine teams may be integrated into the response.

Waterborne SAR:

Waterborne SAR response operations will include DNR-WRD CAT and DNR-WRD Law Enforcement task forces. Additional non-governmental support for canine teams may be integrated into the response.

Wilderness SAR:

Inland or wilderness SAR response operations will include resources from State-level agencies / organizations including DNR-WRD CAT, DNR-WRD Law Enforcement, and DPS SWAT. Additional non-governmental support for canine teams may be integrated into the response.

Aviation SAR:

Aeronautical SAR response operations will include resources from state-level agencies / organizations including the DPS / Georgia Air Operations Branch, and the DNR-WRD Law Enforcement.

In coastal Georgia, aeronautical SAR response operations will be supported by the Aviation Support Operations Center(s) (ASOC). The ASOC is single controlling / coordinating facility providing forward aviation operations capabilities including, but not limited to, mission assignment and tracking, air-space flight deconfliction, air asset prioritization, and communications support.

2.3 Recovery

Animal rescue missions are conducted in conjunction with ESF#11 – Agricultural and Natural Resources. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) retains operations human remains recovery teams that are integrated into SRR operations.

3.0 Assignment of Responsibilities

The assignment of responsibilities section establishes the organizations and agencies that will be relied upon to respond to a disaster or emergency situation. This section also includes tasks that these organizations and agencies are expected to perform.

3.1 ESF Coordinator

The Georgia Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security is the coordinator for ESF#9 and in partnership with the support agencies listed within this document conducts ESF#9 planning, preparedness, response and recovery activities.

Georgia Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security

- Develops further State SRR capabilities by recruiting, organizing, and training additional GSAR task forces.
- Pre-stages SAR task forces in safe proximity to the projected impact area to enact a rapid response, during events with sufficient notice.
- Coordinates SRR operations with the ASOC.
- Coordinates additional logistical support needs with ESF#7 – Resource Support.
- Coordinates the deployment and use of Incident Management Teams (IMT) to support SRR operations.

- Ensures effective coordination of SRR operations between GEMA/HS and local, state, and federal response entities.

3.2 Primary and Support Agencies

Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resources Division / Law Enforcement Division

USAR:

- Provides immediate life-saving assistance
- Conducts rapid impact assessments
- Security and containment of the incident scene
- SRR operations
- Logistical support platforms for other responders

Waterborne SAR:

- Provides immediate life-saving assistance
- Conducts rapid impact assessments
- Waterborne SRR operational support

Wilderness SAR:

- Provides immediate life-saving assistance
- Conducts rapid impact assessments
- Security and containment of the incident scene
- Wilderness / rough terrain SRR operations support

Aviation SAR:

- Providing immediate life-saving assistance
- Conducting rapid impact assessments
- SRR operations
- Provides waterborne and rough terrain transportation
- Logistical support platforms for other responders

Georgia Department of Public Safety – Georgia State Patrol

USAR:

- Perimeter security
- Community security
- SRR task force security
- SWAT SRR support

Wilderness SAR:

- Security and containment of the incident scene
- Communications support

- SRR task force security

Aviation SAR:

- Transport medical support in affected area
- Transport supplies into affected area
- Short Haul Rescue
- Transport-Hoist Rescue (Basket/Litter)
- Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR)
- Coordination of aviation assets (ASOC)

Georgia Bureau of Investigation

USAR:

- Canine team support
- Investigation and crime scene support

Inland or Wilderness SAR:

- Canine team support
- Investigation and crime scene support

Recovery:

- Canine team support
- Human remains recovery team support

Georgia Department of Defense

USAR:

- SRR task forces and mission capability
- Perimeter security
- Rescued persons transport
- Communications support

Waterborne SAR:

- Waterborne SRR mission capability

Wilderness SAR:

- SRR task forces and mission capability
- Perimeter security
- Rescued persons transport
- Communications support

Aviation SAR:

- Aviation transport
- Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR)

- Coordination of aviation assets (ASOC)

Recovery:

- Human remains recovery mission capability
- Aeronautical SAR
- Electronic Locator Transmission (ELT) support for downed craft location during an aviation incident
- Aerial reconnaissance / photography

3.3 Direction, Control, and Coordination

This section describes the framework for all direction, control, and coordination within the State of Georgia and other States.

3.3 A: ESF Coordination within State Operation Center

ESF# 9 will report all activities to the ESF#5 Situation Unit for inclusion in the development of incident action plans and situational reports. All public information reports regarding ESF#9 activities will be coordinated with ESF#15 – External Affairs.

When ESF#9 is activated, Georgia Emergency Management Agency/Homeland Security, with assistance from supporting departments and agencies, assesses and responds to requests for assistance with the management and or maintenance of search and rescue operations and planning or technical assistance from impacted local, state or federal agencies or other ESFs.

In addition to the SOC, ESF#9 may provide personnel to field operations established in Georgia, including but not limited to: Joint Field Offices (JFO), Joint Information Centers (JIC), Disaster Recovery Centers and any other incident facility established to meet operational demands for each particular incident requiring the activation of the GEOP.

3.3 B: Coordination of EMAC Request

The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) is a national mutual aid agreement between the 50 states, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia. It is based on 13 Articles which have been enacted into state law by each state. In Georgia, EMAC is addressed in the O.C.G.A., Title 38, Chapter 3, Article 5.

States may only request assistance via EMAC when their governor has declared a state of emergency. EMAC requires that the state requesting assistance reimburse the state that provides the assistance. The Director of GEMA/HS is the EMAC Authorized Representative (AR) for the State of Georgia. The AR is tasked with the authority to commit and accept resources through EMAC

partnerships. The AR may delegate this authority to the Operations Director, Deputy Operations Director and Finance Director of GEMA/HS. The GEMA/HS Logistics Program Manager is the designated contact (DC) for EMAC. In the absence of the Logistics Program Manager, the agency has identified alternate designated contacts. The DC is commonly referred to as the EMAC Coordinator. The DC coordinates EMAC operations and prepares the official EMAC Request for Assistance (commonly referred to as the REQ-A). When completed, the REQ-A becomes a contract between the requesting and assisting states for the provision of assistance in accordance with EMAC. When the SOC is activated, the Logistics Section Mutual Aid Unit coordinates and manages EMAC missions. This unit will be initially staffed with GEMA/HS personnel, but will likely be augmented by trained EMAC personnel from other states as soon as possible. This unit is also referred to as an EMAC "A" Team.

ESF#9 – Search, Rescue & Recovery will coordinate all EMAC requests with the GEMA/HS EMAC DC or the SOC Logistics Section Mutual Aid Unit, when the SOC is activated. No resource (personnel or equipment) may deploy to another state via EMAC until the REQ-A has been approved and signed by the ARs of the requesting and assisting states, and they have been provided a copy of the REQ-A, briefed and prepared for the mission. To facilitate obtaining any assistance Georgia may need via EMAC, state ESFs should identify their shortfalls in capability and where resources may be obtained to provide this capability. This may be accomplished via informal coordination with sister agencies in other states to determine if the needed resource is available for potential deployment to Georgia, its location and the point of contact for the resource. Such information is critical in expediting a request for assistance via EMAC. For more information on EMAC, contact the GEMA/HS EMAC Designated Contact at 404-635-7200.

3.3 C: ESF Activation, Exercise & Improvement Planning

GEMA/HS systematically coordinates and conducts event debriefings and compiles after action reports for any incident that calls for the activation of all or any portion of the GEOP. ESF#9 shall participate in this process when applicable. After Action Reports will document areas for improvement, resource shortfalls and corrective action planning requirements which will be incorporated into the GEOP, its annexes or ESF SOGs when applicable.

GEMA/HS conducts all exercises within the structure provided by the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP). ESF#9 will participate in all exercise activities when applicable and will follow the HSEEP process to include active participation in planning and evaluation meetings, workshops and conferences.

3.3 D: Development of Standard Operating Guides

The GEMA/HS Planning Section has provided standard operating guide development templates and planning assistance to all ESFs listed in the GEOP. All ESFs will strive to develop operationally ready SOGs for inclusion in the GEOP. ESF# 9 will meet as necessary to develop, review and refine SOGs that discuss specific operational processes and procedures.

3.3 E: Development of Resources Capability List

In conjunction with ESF#7 – Resource Support, ESF#9 will develop, review, refine and maintain lists of all resources currently available and under the control of the primary or support agencies listed in this plan. The development of these lists may be completed by several organizations and professional groups, which currently operate within this ESF. These resource lists should be compliant with the resource typing standards outlined in the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

4.0 ESF Annex Development and Maintenance

This Emergency Support Function Annex will be reviewed every two years and updated as required. In addition the document shall be evaluated for recommended revisions and corrective measures as an integral part of the Agency Exercise or Event After Action Reports / Improvement Plans, as well as internal reviews that will follow the issuance of any Governor Executive Order or passage of legislation impacting the Agency.